

Analysis of Euthanasia and “Kill” rates for Model Jurisdictions Identified in Motion 12521 Compared to King County

Euthanasia Rates - Analysis of Model Jurisdictions and Washington Shelters Compared to King County

In order to evaluate the county’s ability to reach euthanasia rates of 20% by 2008 and 15% by 2009, it is important to understand the rates achieved by model jurisdictions as well as the number of animals euthanized by category at our local shelters.

As Nathan Winograd states in *Building a No-Kill Community*, . . . “at the end of the day, you are only successful if the animals go home alive.” Conversely, the success of the program would also be a low euthanasia rate.

There has been significant discussion regarding the quality of shelter and health care provided to animals at King County Animal Care and Control as measured by the number of animals euthanized and those placed into permanent homes. In order to measure the success of the program, the council requested that the agency track the percentage of animals euthanized as a percentage of animals entering the shelter. In addition to this measure, it is important to measure the euthanasia rates of the “jurisdiction” given that the service lines blur for the region due to transfers of animals between shelters and the fact that if one shelter does not accept an animal it is likely to end up at one of the other shelters. Additionally, some shelters limit admissions to owner release animals while other shelters receive a more challenging shelter population due to a higher percentage of stray release, impounds, and feral animals.

Below is a summary comparison of King County’s euthanasia rates compared to model jurisdictions identified in motion (sorted by jurisdictional euthanasia totals). It should be noted, that in comparing King County’s jurisdictional euthanasia percentages to those of the model jurisdictions noted in Motion 12521, King County ranks fourth out of the six jurisdictions. Among municipal shelters, King County Animal Care and Control ranks 5th out of the animal care and control agencies.

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Table 1: Euthanasia Rate by Model “No-Kill” Jurisdiction and King County

Organization	Year	Population	Total Received	Total Euthanized	Euthanasia Rate
Tompkins County SPCA	2006	96,501	2353	144	6%
Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA	2006	92,035	5166	432	8%
San Francisco Animal Care and Control	2006	751,682	6702	1357	20%
San Francisco SPCA	2006		3360	71	2%
San Francisco Regional Subtotal		751,682	10062	1428	14%
Richmond Animal Care and Control	2006	193,777	4238	1581	37%
Richmond SPCA	2006	300,000	3426	33	1%
Richmond Regional Subtotal		300,000	7664	1614	21%
King County Animal Services	2005	1,160,823	11,990	4,666	39%
Humane Society for SKC	2005	Unknown	6922	1518	22%
Seattle Animal Shelter	2005	573,911	6206	1366	22%
King County Totals	2005	1,793,583	25,118	7,550	30%
Washoe County Animal Care and Control	2006	380,000	15,913	5028	32%
Nevada Humane Society	2006	Unknown	8145	2566	32%
Washoe County Regional Subtotal		380,000	24,058	7,594	32%
Philadelphia Animal Care and Control Association (PACCA)	2006		na	na	na
Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society	2006		na	na	na
Philadelphia Regional Subtotal		1,500,000	23,903	12,689	53%
Model Program Jurisdictional Averages (excluding KC)		3,120,218	73,206	23,901	33%
Model Program Jurisdictional Averages (Including KC)		4,913,801	98,324	1,451	32%
WA State Average		5,155,549	142,090	60,399	43%

San Francisco's municipal shelter has achieved a rate of 20%, while the local SPCA achieved 2% in 2006. Ms. Brown, deputy director, attributed their success to a successful partnership between the local animal care and control agency (an open admission shelter which has a euthanasia rate of 20%) and local humane society (limited admission shelter with a euthanasia rate of 2%) for an overall euthanasia rate of 14%. This rate of euthanasia was achieved after 14 years of effort.

Tompkins County went “no-kill” in 1999 and by 2002 was saving all healthy adoptable animals. Per Nathan Winograd, Executive Director when the agency went “no-kill”, the agencies success was primarily as a: *“result of increasing adoptions, improving public relations, improving handling and care protocols which reduced rates of disease, use of volunteers to keep dogs and cat socially stimulated and therefore behaviorally sound*

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and healthy, reliance on a foster care network, and eliminating under-performing staff. In terms of adoptions, the focus was on public access hours, offsite adoptions, adoption incentives, thoughtful but not overly bureaucratic screening, good customer service, all combined with public relations to increase market share in the community.” (Nathan Winograd, Winogr~1)”

Richmond, Virginia as a jurisdiction comes in with a lower euthanasia average than King County jurisdiction at 21%, however, the Richmond Animal Care and Control agency's rate of euthanasia was 37% was comparable to KCACC rate of 39% in 2005.

The jurisdictions of Washoe County and Philadelphia come in sixth and seventh, with euthanasia rates of 32% and 53% respectively.

Within Washington, the jurisdiction of King County ranks 3rd in overall euthanasia rate (see Table #2 below). Seattle Animal Shelter and Humane Society are tied for third place for lowest euthanasia rates (with euthanasia rates of 22% each), while King County Animal Care and Control ranks 9th. For municipal shelters, Seattle ranks second, and King County Animal Shelter 3rd of the eight municipal shelters evaluated.

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**Table 2: Euthanasia Rate Comparison of Top 20 State Shelters
by Intake (2005 data)**

Organization/County	Total Received	Total Euthanized	Euthanasia Rate
Clallam County Humane Society	2592	610	24%
Clallam Total	2592	610	24%
Humane Society of Skagit Valley	2652	690	26%
Skagit Total	2652	690	26%
King County Animal Services	11,990	4,666	39%
Humane Society for SKC	6922	1518	22%
Seattle Animal Shelter	6206	1366	22%
King Total	25,118	7,550	30%
Everett Animal Shelter	8842	3478	39%
PAWS	3828	659	17%
Snohomish Total	12670	4137	33%
Humane Society of Cowlitz County	5148	1880	37%
Cowlitz Total	5148	1880	37%
Spokanimal CARE	8809	4332	49%
Spokane Reg Protection Services	6782	2234	33%
Spokane Humane Society	3805	678	18%
Spokane Total	19396	7244	37%
Lewis County Animal Shelter	2637	1064	40%
Lewis Total	2637	1064	40%
Wenatchee Valley Humane Society	5801	2292	40%
Chelan Total	5801	2292	40%
Kitsap Humane Society	7112	2906	41%
Kitsap Total	7112	2906	41%
Animal Services	8124	3496	43%
Thurston Total	8124	3496	43%
Humane Society for Tacoma	20361	9704	48%
Pierce Total	20361	9704	48%
Humane Society of Central WA	7126	4150	58%
Yakima Total	7126	4150	58%
Humane Society for SW WA	13766	8592	62%
Clark Total	13766	8592	62%
Blue Mountain Humane Society	3154	1976	63%
Walla Walla Total	3154	1976	63%
Tri-City Animal Control	6433	4108	64%
Benton Total	6433	4108	64%
Grand Total	142,090	60,399	43%

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Animal People is a leading independent newspaper providing original investigative reporting of animal welfare agencies worldwide. Each year, it publishes a “kill report” based on a compilation of polls from open admission shelters handling significant numbers of animals in specific cities, counties or states. The “kill” rate is based on animals euthanized per 1000 population served and, similar to the euthanasia percentage, is considered an effectiveness measure of a shelters overall programs and the community programs. The average for “kill rates” nationwide of shelters surveyed was 12.5 (very close to Washington State's average of 11.72 for the top 20 shelters surveyed).

Table 3: Kill Rate Comparison of Model “No-Kill” Jurisdiction and King County

Organization	Year	Population	Total Euthanized	Kill Rate/1000 population
Tompkins County SPCA	2006	96,501	144	1.49
San Francisco Animal Care and Control	2006	751,682	1,357	
San Francisco SPCA	2006		71	
San Francisco Regional Subtotal		751,682	1,428	1.90
King County Animal Services	2005	1,160,823	4,666	
Humane Society for SKC	2005	Unknown	1,518	
Seattle Animal Shelter	2005	573,911	1,366	
King County Totals	2005	1,793,583	7,550	4.21
Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA	2005	92,035	432	4.70
Richmond Animal Care and Control	2006	193,777	1,581	
Richmond SPCA	2006	300,000	33	
Richmond Regional Subtotal		300,000	1,614	5.38
Philadelphia Animal Care and Control Association (PACCA)	2006		na	
Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society	2006		na	
Philadelphia Regional Subtotal		1,500,000	12,689	8.46
Washoe County Animal Care and Control	2006	380,000	5,028	
Nevada Humane Society	2006	Unknown	2,566	
Washoe County Regional Subtotal		380,000	7,594	19.98
Model Program Jurisdictional Average (excluding KC)		3,120,218	23,901	7.66
Model Program Jurisdictional Average (including KC)		4,913,801	31,451	6.40
WA State Jurisdictional Average				11.72
National Average				12.50

Note: Humane Society population based on agencies stated projected population served.

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If the jurisdiction of King County were ranked on the 2007 *Animal Peoples* report (Appendix E), it would have one of the lowest kill rates per 1000 people nation wide, with 4.2 kills per 1000 compared to the national average of 12.5. Of the model jurisdictions, only San Francisco and Tompkins County would rank lower. All other model jurisdictions have a higher kill rate, although, all of them, with the exception of Washoe County would rank lower than the national average, which could be attributed in large part to their model programs and commitment to adopting out all healthy and treatable animals (including feral cats for some jurisdictions) are saved.

State of Washington (including Seattle Animal Control and the Humane Society for Seattle/King County) Analysis of “Kill” rates per 1000 Population:

In comparing the King County animal shelter with other shelters in the state, the agency used the Washington State Federation of Animal Care and Control Agencies 2005 Annual Report which captures annual rates of animal intakes, adoptions and euthanasia rates for virtually every animal welfare agency throughout the state of Washington to determine trends and the overall effectiveness of the programs. (The Federation was formed in 1908 as the Washington Humane Society. Today, it is a professional organization dedicated to preventing cruelty to animals and advancing the humane ethic in Washington State.)

For analysis purposes, the top twenty (20) agencies by total intake (2005 data) were captured for the analysis. Jurisdictional resource data and death statistical analysis added by KC staff based on phone surveys.

It should also be noted, that within the state of Washington, King County jurisdiction has the lowest kill ratio in the state at 4.2 (compared to state average of 11.72).

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Table 4: Kill Rate Comparison of Top 20 State Shelters by Intake (2005 data)

Organization/County	Population (based on Census Data of jurisdiction)	Total Euthanized	Death Rate/1000 population (by jurisdiction)
King County Animal Services	1,160,823	4,666	
Humane Society for SKC	Unknown	1,518	
Seattle Animal Shelter	573,911	1366	
King Total	1,793,583	7,550	4.21
Humane Society of Skagit Valley	113,171	690	
Skagit Total	113,172	690	6.11
Everett Animal Shelter	655,944	3478	
PAWS	Unknown	659	
Snohomish Total	655,944	4137	6.31
Clallam County Humane Society	69,689	610	
Clallam Total	69,690	610	8.71
Animal Services	288,867	3496	
Thurston Total	288,868	3496	12.10
Humane Society for Tacoma	684,299	9704	
Pierce Total	684,299	9704	14.19
Lewis County Animal Shelter	71,299	1064	
Lewis Total	71,300	1064	14.99
Spokanimal CARE	196,818	4332	
Spokane Reg Protection Services	243,888	2234	
Spokane Humane Society	Unknown	678	
Spokane Total	440,706	7244	16.43
Humane Society of Central WA	231,586	4150	
Yakima Total	231,587	4150	17.89
Humane Society of Cowlitz County	97,325	1880	
Cowlitz Total	97,326	1880	19.38
Humane Society for SW WA	363,126	8592	
Clark Total	363,126	8592	23.67
Tri-City Animal Control	151,808	4108	
Benton Total	151,808	4108	27.03
Wenatchee Valley Humane Society	99,740	2292	
Chelan Total	99,740	2292	22.92
Blue Mountain Humane Society	57,558	1976	
Walla Walla Total	57,559	1976	34.07
Kitsap Humane Society	36,841	2906	
Kitsap Total	36,841	2906	78.54
Grand Total	5,155,549	60,399	11.72

King County shelters' combined (Seattle, Humane Society and King County) euthanasia rates per 1000 population is the lowest euthanasia rate for all welfare agency jurisdictions statewide, with an overall euthanasia rate of 4.21 per thousand. It is also one of the lowest in the nation, based on the *Animal Peoples* analysis (Appendix E).